



National Nuclear Security Administration

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U.S. and Dominican Republic Agree To Join Nuclear Smuggling Prevention Effort

SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – The United States signed a Declaration of Principles today with the government of the Dominican Republic to help thwart smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive material. The Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) cosigned the declaration. The document covers implementation of NNSA's Megaports Initiative and CBP's Container Security Initiative, as both programs continue working together to stop nuclear material from being smuggled to U.S. ports.

"Today's agreement with the Dominican Republic is critical to international security and the stability of the global shipping network. It is a concrete example of each country's commitment to preventing nuclear terrorism," said NNSA Administrator Linton F. Brooks.

NNSA's Megaports Initiative involves working with foreign governments to install specialized radiation detection equipment and enhance capabilities to detect, deter and interdict illicit shipments of nuclear and other radioactive materials at international ports. The initiative is currently operational in six countries, and at various stages of implementation and negotiations with approximately 30 other countries around the world.

Under the Container Security Initiative, officers from both CBP and Immigration and Customs Enforcement are stationed at key seaports abroad to work with host governments to identify high-risk shipments bound for the U.S. and to examine these shipments prior to loading. CSI operates at 44 ports in North America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and North, South and Central America. About 75 percent of all cargo containers destined for U.S. shores originate in or are transshipped through CSI ports.

"CBP's highest priority is preventing the smuggling of illicit nuclear weapons and radiological materials into the U.S.," said CBP Commissioner W. Ralph Basham. "CSI is a cornerstone program that both strengthens security and facilitates the movement of legitimate trade."

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

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